

Testimony in support of Raised H.B. No. 6485 "An Act Concerning a Barbershop Apprenticeship Program"

Good morning Senator Gerratana, State Representative Johnson, and honorable members of the Public Health Committee. My name is Miguel Varga of the 63 Av. West of Willimantic, I am here to speak on behalf of many other barber that were not able to come today, in support of Raised H.B. No. 6485 "An Act Concerning a Barbershop Apprenticeship Program

We the barbers of Willimantic and Windham County are supportive of the language and we ask the committee to vote in favor of H.B. 6485; however, we ask you to consider the possibility of adjusting or change the language of the bill to actually create the barbershop apprenticeship program this year. LPRAC Commissioner Lourdes Montalvo and Commission Acting Director Werner Oyanadel already met with all the stakeholders and already has response to all the questions listed with this and are ready to present the findings during the public hearing.

Today, barbershops generally offer simpler haircuts than beauty salons or spas. Increasing, women are choosing to utilize barbershops for short or simple haircuts because they cost much less than the same cut at a salon. In small towns, the barber can still be the place to go for town gossip and political discussion, please come visit us.

I am a Barber for more than 18 years. It was this way that I have been able to support my family and pay taxes in Willimantic, one of the most poor cities in the State of CT. I do not know another profession and unfortunately although I would like to go to the Academy; I can not because I have to support my family. When I started as Barber they had no requirements. The Laws came after. I just want to do my job without local police giving unfair fines. When I started, I was not in violation of any law because there were no laws and now the police will not let me work quiet.

Today I am asking for an opportunity not only for me but for many other barbers that the only thing we want is make a decent living.
Please support a reform that can be implemented as soon as possible.

Thank you, for your time and the opportunity to listen to my testimony.